

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee, my name is Shawna Mickel (M I C K E L). I am a member of the Helena Brain Injury Support Group. Those standing are in support of funding for RFS.

I have a brain injury.

Ten years ago, my skull was fractured in an assault by my boyfriend. I needed to have three brain surgeries. After that, I had some serious brain damage.

After each surgery, I spent a day and half in the hospital. Then I was sent home.

I had very little short term memory. I couldn't boil an egg.

Neither my family nor I knew anything about brain injury. No one had given me any information about how to rebuild my life.

Because my family did not understand brain injury, they didn't know how to deal with what was wrong. We had no information from the doctors about physical or psychological rehabilitation.

I needed a support system, like I have now with my brain injury support group. And I needed information about how to retrain my brain.

If I had RFS when I got out of the hospital, I would have had support to work through the injury.

RFS gives families with brain injuries important information. It also gives brain injury survivors support to achieve their goals.

Thank you for the funding you provided for RFS last July, and thank you for continuing to fund RFS.